

*The History and Plans
of Lit-Lit*

*Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature
of the Division of Foreign Missions, NCCC*



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2020 with funding from
Columbia University Libraries

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Objectives.....	1
History and Background.....	2
The Contemporary Scene	5
Literacy and Christian Literature Today	6
Growth of Cooperative Work.....	6
Successful Centers for Literature and Literacy.....	7
Literacy Teams	8
Suceessful Book Series	10
Increasing Recognition of Need of Trained Personnel....	11
The Future	12
Conferences on Literacy and Literature.....	12
More Literacy Centers	12
Literacy Training Teams.....	13
Strengthening Literature Committees	13
Books for Africa	14
Research and Study of Priorities for Advance	14
Financial Support.....	16
Personnel.....	16
Greatest Need is Trained Personnel	16

The History and Plans of Lit-Lit

As a functional unit of the Division of Foreign Missions, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., this Committee has well defined and clear objectives.

OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose of Christian Literature is to develop and extend the use of one of the most indispensable tools for the proclamation of the Gospel in its fullness, both to individuals and for the extension and up-building of the Christian Church.

The primary purpose of a Christian literacy program is to teach illiterate peoples to read by establishing a literate church in a literate community. Literacy can best be carried to the illiterate millions through a literate church.

The primary task of the Committee is to assist in the advance of literacy and literature in the programs of the Member Boards. This has certain pre-suppositions:

This task can be accomplished most effectively through cooperative action.

Literacy programs should lead directly to the effective use of Christian literature.

Both literacy and literature can and should be used for Christian witness.

The correlated literacy-literature program is a continuing opportunity both to reach new converts and also to aid in the nurture of Christian believers.

Such a program demonstrates how the Christian faith touches all of life – physical, mental and spiritual.

A long range objective of the Committee is the transfer of our concern for proclaiming the Gospel through the use of the printed word to the leaders of the Christian community and the Christian Church abroad. When the Younger Churches see literacy and literature as necessary and effective tools, they will then – and not

until then — be able to make the adaptations which will carry the full Christian message to all members of their society. In this, the Committee's task is to stimulate, encourage and teach, even while it is the servant of those it seeks to help. Our task includes the calling and training of literacy specialists, writers, teachers, editors and booksellers into Christian vocations to serve their Master through the witness of literature.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The use of Christian literature is not a new method of missionary work. The modern era of missions is said to have begun with William Carey's arrival in India in 1793. His presses were kept busy with an incredible stream of Bible translations and original English and vernacular materials. Robert Morrison found translation and literature the only approach possible in China in 1807. Henry Martyn, arriving in India in 1806, soon achieved his desire "to burn out for God" in his writings in Indian and Persian languages.

It was left for the great technical advances in printing and communication of this century to create a new urgency that Christian missions use the printed word in a more effective way. Mission presses were established and a continuous, though not large, stream of Christian literature strengthened the life of the Younger Church. At Edinburgh in 1910, the need for Christian literature was emphasized. Special literature committees were organized for Africa, India and Latin America, but it came to be recognized that an adequate program of Christian literature would require the cooperation of all interested groups. The creation and growth of the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature is a striking example of this ever-increasing cooperation in planning and action.

In December 1938, Dr. R. E. Diffendorfer, who headed the American Section of the Committee on Christian Literature of the International Missionary Council at the time of the Madras meeting, gave the keynote address on "The Opportunity in World Literacy and Christian Literature." It was a call to the Foreign Missions Conference of North America to do something practical about "the vital and neglected subject of Christian literature."

The first practical step taken by the Foreign Missions Confer-

ence was the union, in February 1943, of the Committee on Christian Literature of the International Missionary Council and the World Literacy Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference into a Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature of the Foreign Missions Conference. This new committee, often referred to as "Lit-Lit", was asked to do four things:

To tell the American churches about the vital needs of illiterates and how more adequate Christian literature in mission lands could be secured through cooperative efforts.

To develop literacy campaigns and help produce the materials required for that purpose.

To give technical counsel and service to mission boards at home and to missionaries and cooperating literature agencies abroad.

To encourage support from boards and other sources for approved projects in literacy and Christian literature.

The Lit-Lit Committee started with nineteen boards represented on its membership plus some "coopted" members added because of their experience and usefulness in the Christian literature field. It maintained close contact with other literature groups such as the American Christian Literature Society for Muslims (merged with Lit-Lit on December 10, 1943), the Committee on Christian Literature for Women and Children in Mission Fields, Inc., International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa in London, the Literature Committee of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, and the World Sunday School Association (now Council of Christian Education).

Within a year the Lit-Lit Committee produced and distributed a series of leaflets, booklets, books and newsletters, 62,000 pieces of printed matter, and twenty-four different sets of mimeographed articles, stories, plays and reports on opportunities in Christian literature and literacy.

In 1943 before the Lit-Lit Committee was established, the Committee on Christian Literature of the International Missionary Council made allocations of \$4,200 to the various Area Committees for Christian literature. In 1944, the first year of its operation, the Lit-Lit Committee allocated from funds contributed by Member Boards a total of \$48,642. That figure matched the askings from the fields. With the growth of the Committee's work, and with the

calling of a full time secretary, grants from the boards have not kept pace with the needs and askings from the field. The Rev. Alfred D. Moore gave ten years of outstanding service as Executive Secretary of the Lit-Lit Committee.

Dr. Frank C. Laubach's overseas literacy campaigns, his newsletters and home speaking schedules gave an immense lift to the first years' service of the Committee. Dr. Laubach is one of the outstanding missionaries of our time, who has lifted up a Twentieth Century idea of evangelism through literacy. He saw the need for an open Bible, read in the languages of the peoples of the earth. He also saw that literacy is too great a task for traditional education. His literacy charts and his slogan of "Each One Teach One" have made possible a new approach to literacy. He has had great gifts of persuasion to make the claims of the "Silent Billion" heard.

One of Frank Laubach's outstanding characteristics is that he is never satisfied with the job he has just finished. He wants the next to be better. This is like a command for the Committee's future work. Workers come and go, but the work must go on. The present leadership and staff of the Lit-Lit Committee is dedicated to make Dr. Laubach's great work and ideals an integral part of the church's responsibility.

In 1951 a group of Lit-Lit Committee members and other friends of Dr. Laubach formed a charitable corporation, World Literacy, Inc., in order to raise additional funds outside of church channels for the Committee's work and to make it possible for Dr. Laubach to accept calls for his services to governmental and private agencies abroad. For a time this arrangement proved satisfactory. However, in 1954 the corporation decided to sever its connections with the Lit-Lit Committee and not to carry through certain long-term projects in which the corporation and the Committee cooperated. Early in 1955 Dr. Laubach announced his decision to withdraw from his connections with the Lit-Lit Committee and to give his time to the secular literacy programs of World Literacy, Inc. in order to carry on his activities in literacy and other interests as a "free lance."

The confusion, among many of the Committee's supporters and among church and mission leaders, about Dr. Laubach's continuing appeals for funds which did not benefit the Committee's

work made it necessary to place this matter in the hands of the Executive Board of the Division of Foreign Missions. A clarifying statement and action on the Committee's responsibility for church-sponsored literacy and Christian literature support was passed at the Sixth Annual Assembly of the D.F.M. at Dayton, Ohio, in November 1955. (See Appendix I.)

THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

Illiteracy is still a major world problem in spite of the great achievements of recent years. In many countries, 70% – 80% of the people cannot read. From some areas come reports that as many as 90% of those supposedly taught to read have no effective use of the printed page. No Christian can be complacent in the face of such facts.

Yet ever changing conditions put before the Christian missionary literacy-literature enterprise new problems and opportunities.

Millions of men and women are learning to read each year, or could be taught through methods of proved success. They may now be influenced in vast numbers, but they may be influenced for good or evil! Increasing literacy is creating a new kind of world in which to preach the Gospel.

In today's world, mission organizations are finding increasing restrictions on their activities. Governments may refuse entry visas, or restrict the traditional educational or medical functions of the missions, as in South Africa where mission schools are being taken over by governments. Social pressures directed against "proselytizing" may effect the preaching function of missionaries or nationals.

However, the door is open to preach the Gospel in new and effective ways, if the church will use the very force which is helping to produce such change, namely, literacy and literature. The literate millions may be reached, far beyond the sound of the preacher's voice. Among the various media of mass communication, it must be remembered that there is no substitute for the printed page. It does not depend on time or space; for when the broadcast ends, and the moving picture fades out, the reader carries his book or magazine wherever he goes, and he pores over it again and again to meet his need.

Reading habits are showing significant changes ever since World War II. There is a great increase in the reading of periodicals and also in the use of pictures and picture magazines. The cartoon type of cheap booklet is widespread in this country and abroad. The picture periodical is widely used by the Communists in Asia as an indoctrination pamphlet.

Part of the success of today's bestseller rests upon the careful attention given, especially since the war, to the art of communication. Readability studies in vocabulary, sentence structure and the psychology of comprehending written ideas have brought many improved techniques. A magazine such as the *Reader's Digest* has been successful in transferring its skills to the editor of editions in many languages. The fact that no other periodical has won such success suggests the difficulty which the *Reader's Digest* has overcome. Here writers, editors and publishers of Christian literature have much to learn.

LITERACY AND CHRISTIAN LITERATURE TODAY

The missionary movement may well take courage, as it reviews the significant beginnings that have been made, even though the remaining task is formidable.

Growth of Cooperative Work. The nineteen Member Boards of Lit-Lit in 1943 increased to thirty-nine by 1954. Between 1943 and 1954 the annual support for Christian literature through Lit-Lit rose from \$27,000 to \$230,000. These funds helped to increase the production of every type of literature from one-page tracts to theological literature, in many languages and many lands. The war had left some literature agencies stranded, others deprived of equipment or paper. The rehabilitation and reconstruction of facilities in Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Burma took a major share of the projects' budget of the Committee for several years. Paper shortages were met by special grants or shipments to the Near East, West and East Pakistan, India and Korea. Thirteen presses were restored or modernized with funds from Lit-Lit.

This financial cooperation on the part of the boards has been matched by cooperative working committees and groups of missionaries and Nationals on the fields. The Committee is related to nearly fifty literacy and/or literature groups in Latin American countries, North Africa, Egypt, the Sudan, Liberia, Kenya, Tan-

ganyika, Belgian Congo, Rhodesia, Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Lebanon, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Nepal, Thailand, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, the Phillippines, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and others. Many of these depend upon part time personnel. In these countries, the Committee is in touch with about one hundred individuals with specialized interest, training, and skills who are laying the foundations for future development. This worldwide fellowship of committees and individuals is a source of great strength.

Successful Centers for Literature and Literacy. In many of the countries listed above there are Christian literature centers, presses, bookstores, often under cooperative direction. In some a mission puts these facilities in the service of the whole Christian community. The financial investment of the boards, in presses, literature buildings, and stocks of books is considerable, and represents a great asset in Christian literature.

These literature centers show great variety, for they have grown out of local needs. They have been responsible for increasing cooperation in the production of indigenous literature. The Literature Committee in Japan helped in the organization of a Christian Publishers' Association, and a Christian Writers' Association. In India, the mission presses have established a Service Council, which makes it possible for the members to share their technical equipment and skills. This Council has urged each member press to concentrate efforts on one or two vernaculars and thus make for greater efficiency as each press serves all church groups in that language area. In Hong Kong an effective Council for Christian Literature for Overseas Chinese is publishing a large amount of Christian literature, which is sold widely in the countries outside of Red China, where Chinese people now live. Its work is growing rapidly.

The promotion of literacy through missions and churches has led to the establishment of several literacy centers. Some of these, such as the work of Dr. and Mrs. Wesley Sadler in Liberia, have not been easily accessible to missionaries from other areas who could profit by a study of the methods used. In Korea the Christian Literacy Association is carrying on its program from modest quarters. In India, Rev. John Naumann, as Literacy Secretary of the National Christian Council, is active in promoting the work of literacy through the many regional councils, rather than by attempt-

ing to centralize efforts in one spot.

Better known is the literacy work among the Evangelical churches in Egypt. Here experimentation has been carried far into developing a program suited to the local needs. It has been found most successful to engage in literacy campaigns for total villages with the support of the whole population. Successful use has been made of a supervisory system which conserves volunteer help and secures a maximum of solid accomplishment. The program has led inevitably into health, handcraft and food projects. It has brought a quickening of the spiritual life of the local church. The success of several village literacy programs has stimulated the construction of village schools, the establishment of cooperative societies and the organization of a Christian Writers' Fellowship that is preparing simple literature for new literates. Significantly it has brought a spirit of reconciliation between diverse groups in the villages. While the methods that prove successful there will not always apply everywhere, it is clear that literacy workers will gain much by observation and study of this center.

Literacy Teams. Great strides have been made in literacy work in the past decade by the extensive travel and services of the Laubach literacy teams. This period coincided with the rise of new nations seeking the means of self-government. Literacy and fundamental education are now recognized as necessities, not only in the underdeveloped countries but also in those that have neglected the uneducated in their midst.

The special contribution of a Christian organization to the advancement of literacy does not lie primarily in the provision of technical skills. To be sure, the prolonged residence and service of Christian missionaries gives them a knowledge of the languages and customs of the underdeveloped areas. The key to success in our literacy work lies in the Christian conviction that nothing is worth doing unless it be done in the spirit of love. The Each-One Teach-One principle is not a formula to save time and money, but an expression of respect for the value of human personality. Every disciple has the responsibility to share his knowledge, skills and resources with those in need. Each-One-Teach-One is also sound pedagogy. The tutorial system of teaching practiced by our Lord Jesus Christ is the most effective way of teaching in the long run. It provides opportunities for personal evangelism which no classroom or broadcast can duplicate. The "cup of water" must be

given to the one who thirsts, but the spirit in which it is given makes the difference to him who receives it between accepting a service rendered or meeting the Lord through a newly discovered brother.

From the experience gained in preparing Literacy charts and primers in over 250 languages and adaptations of the simply written "Story of Jesus" in more than 60 languages we have learned how to take the first steps in literacy. We have found that effective reading materials for newly literate adults should be the product of teamwork. In spite of so-called "closing doors" there are ample opportunities for the trained linguist and anthropologist, for the teacher of adults, the creative artist and writer to make this Christian work an exciting adventure and a test of patience and devotion for ordained and lay missionaries.

The 1956 Literacy Team, building on the experience of past literacy tours, made notable advance into new methods and techniques. The team concentrated six months of work in adjoining countries in an area, with very great profit. In Egypt, revised primers and readers were made ready for publication by supplying new illustrations, and guidance was given to the Writers' Fellowship. In the Sudan a writers' workshop and a training course for literacy workers was planned as the first steps in a new advance. In Kenya new charts and primers were made in Kikuyu, and with the help of a group of missionaries and African workers, considerable writing and translating was prepared for the printer, and plans were laid for intensive literacy efforts in a group of selected villages.

The team spent three months in Tanganyika in a training program. In a two weeks' workshop, over forty missionaries and African leaders made plans for literacy work in eight vernaculars. Charts and primers were made in two, a revision was completed in a third, and progress was reported in five other languages. A large amount of writing and translating was done.

The Committee was fortunate in being able to send a team that was both international and interracial, as well as interdenominational.

The results of this new and intensive approach yielded many insights into the successive stages of literacy work. It revealed great need for emphasis on the follow-up of the initial efforts, if

illiterates are to be taken up to full functional literacy. It is now clear that there must be a transfer from the first literacy demonstrations and campaign to an ongoing literature program, anchored in the church. The team's emphasis on this process so impressed the missionaries who attended the course, that several persons are being appointed to full time work in literacy and literature.

Successful Book Series. From the East Asian Christian Literature Conference in Singapore in 1951, came requests for a series of books, simply written, on the major topics of Christian concern. This led to the launching of the World Christian Books project under the general editorship of Bishop Stephen Neill of Geneva, Switzerland. The project was intended to provide well printed books, sold below cost, to all who were eager to read or own them. It hopes to meet the needs for Christian literature under new conditions, such as the restrictions on evangelistic work of missionaries, the new life shown by old faiths, and the spread of Communist literature. The principal object of World Christian Books is to present the Christian faith in its major aspects, in language simple enough so that ordinary members of the Church can understand it, and to enlist gifted writers and interpreters from many lands for this effort.

The International Missionary Council acted as sponsor of the series and the Conference of British Missionary Societies and Lit-Lit assumed financial responsibility for the administrative expenses during the initial years. English language editions were published by the Lutterworth Press in London and the Association Press in New York. Thus a local market can be reached as well as a large group of missionaries and educated Christians overseas. Lit-Lit looks after the preliminary review of World Christian Books manuscripts by American advisors and specialists, arranges for the purchase orders by American boards for missionaries overseas, and supports the administrative budget of World Christian Books.

Where do the books go? The publisher distributes them to sixty-four countries, in part through orders from mission boards and societies, in part through the ordinary book channels. Nearly 150,000 copies of the first twelve volumes have been sold in the English editions. In terms of potential use, with a little more effort on the part of the churches in Britain, the U.S.A. and Canada, the sale of the English editions could be doubled and financial independence of the project assured.

The real purpose of World Christian Books, however, has been to promote vernacular editions, in translation or adaptation. To date, books have been published or translations are in process in Sinhalese, Chinese, Arabic, Persian, Burmese, Sgaw Karen, Pwo Karen, Kachin, Chin, Indonesian, Urdu, Bengali, Oriya, Hindi; French, German Telugu, Thai, Japanese, and Tamil. Nearly one hundred translated volumes have been published or are under way.

Other Organizations. Mention must also be made of similar organizations interested in some phase of this work. There are no other organizations promoting literacy through church-related channels, but there are several groups concerned with some aspect of Christian literature, including the Bible Societies, the Christian Literature Committee of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, the International Missionary Council, the International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa, the Committee on Christian Literature for Women and Children in Mission Fields, Inc. The wise coordination of all these resources will make possible more effective action. There are also other groups with which cooperation is important, but not realized up to the present: Evangelical Literature Overseas, Literatura Evangelica en America Latina, Christian Literature Crusade, Africa Literature Campaign and others.

In certain areas, governmental or other agencies are active in producing or distributing general literature, and cooperation with them will reduce the burden on Christian literature groups for such needed material.

Increasing Recognition of Need of Trained Personnel. The need for trained personnel is slowly being recognized by the missions and churches. In general and with some exceptions, the American boards have not given as much attention to this need as have some British and Dutch societies, who have sent highly trained personnel for specific tasks in writing, producing or distribution. The last decade has seen a growing interest by our Member Boards, and a growing list of missionaries are now assigned to full time literacy or literature work. Many of them secure technical training, as candidates or while on furlough.

Even more important is the training of national workers. The Committee's limited scholarship funds have helped gifted Nationals to receive special training in literacy, linguistics, and religious journalism at the Hartford Seminary Foundation's Kennedy School

of Missions, at Syracuse University, and at Hislop Christian College of Nagpur University in India. These scholars have done creditable work in their studies and internships and are now occupying strategic positions in Liberia, Uganda, Egypt, India, Korea, and Japan.

THE FUTURE

The resources of the Christian literacy and literature program, as listed in the last section above, point the direction of the main emphases of the Committee's work in the coming years.

CONFERENCES ON LITERACY AND LITERATURE

In 1957 Dr. Rex visited Latin America to explore the needs for joint literacy programs.

From the Far East has come a suggestion that a second Literature Conference is needed, following the 1951 Singapore meeting. The request is for a conference in 1958. It will require careful preparation, and the enlisting of the cooperation of all interested groups.

It must be recognized, that with some notable exceptions, *the Younger Churches have not generally recognized their opportunity and responsibility for teaching the illiterates around their churches, or indeed for insuring that all church members can read. In the field of literature, few National workers have been released from other duties in order to promote indigenous materials, and fewer have been given adequate training in the skills needed.* Until the Younger Churches take seriously the supplying of Christian literature as a major responsibility, in either a narrow or broad definition of the term "Christian literature," our task is unfinished.

MORE LITERACY CENTERS

The great contribution which has been made in Egypt, both for the church there and as an example to other countries, has led to inquiries about other literacy centers. The very high illiteracy figures for Pakistan, and even for church members there, makes it important to attempt a Literacy Center in West Pakistan. Personnel, funds, and careful planning will be required.

The success of the 1956 Literacy Team has led to plans for several literacy campaigns in East Africa, and the hope has been expressed that some continuing help can be given through a re-

gional center. This will depend on the success of the local campaigns in the next year or two.

But whether in the East or elsewhere in Africa we see a great need for a center from which technical help can be given. Here literacy cannot be separated from the preparation of simple literature. Just as literacy is a condition for literature, so literature is a condition for literacy. The two must go hand in hand. Such a center would require personnel with a wide range of expert skills, since it would be working at every level from basic tone analysis of languages as yet not reduced to writing, through chart and primer preparation and illustration, to directing the type of literacy campaign that may be needed, on to the writing of graded readers and basic materials for religious instruction and general welfare. Of its importance there can be no question.

LITERACY TRAINING TEAMS

Many calls are coming to Lit-Lit for literacy teams in Africa. If the center mentioned above can be organized, it could be the base for a team or teams. Literacy teams should also make possible the exchange of missionaries with literacy experience, from country to country for periods of one to three months. This would be of mutual benefit in broadened experience and would help to train the team personnel that are so difficult to find.

We have also had requests and some discussions about a Literacy Team for the Southeast Asia area in 1958 or 1959.

There is also under discussion the preparation of new materials in Spanish, for literacy programs both in the Southwest of this country, and in Latin America.

STRENGTHENING LITERATURE COMMITTEES

The major contribution of our Member Boards for the production and distribution of Christian literature is carried on through the ongoing, unspectacular work of many field committees and groups. In most countries, this planning and production is advanced through cooperative committees which should be strengthened. Most of them are seriously handicapped by lack of funds, and most of them need additional personnel. The technical resources in writing and editing which are highly developed in the West, must be made available to these literature committees if they are to become wise stewards of their resources.

The Lit-Lit office carries on a heavy correspondence with these field groups, and this technical service will continue to be an important part of the Committee's work.

BOOKS FOR AFRICA

Successful as the World Christian Books have been, it is generally recognized that most of them do not meet the needs of many tribal groups in Africa. The World Christian Books are gaining wide acceptance in the lands where industrialization and westernization have progressed and where a certain world cultural atmosphere is emerging. However, in many parts of Africa literature is needed which is prepared in terms of African folk cultures and of society in the process of detribalization. Such material should be written in African languages with the cooperation of a missionary and African staff.

Much study must go into this urgent need. It may be possible to make modest beginnings in connection with the programs for the writing of literature for new literates.

Research and Study of Priorities for Advance. With opportunities beckoning far beyond the foreseeable resources of the Committee, it is urgent that careful study be given to both literacy and literature programs. There is need for research in the results of literacy campaigns of recent years. What have been the consequences for individuals, the village, the local church? Where have they had the greatest results, in areas of health, economics, social conditions, or religion? What happens when Each-One-Teach-One is taken not only as a pragmatic literacy technique, but as a spiritual adventure between an illiterate person and volunteer, or full time worker? How many fall by the wayside? Why? Such a study will be of great value in establishing priorities for new projects.

In literature there is an equally urgent need for setting up standards by which to evaluate our present efforts. What literature does communicate to the reader? What forms of publication deserve support?

In Christian literature it has been suggested that programs can follow any one of three types. There is the short order lunch counter, where pressing hunger is met with whatever happens to be available. It is emergency service, and has its place on occasion. But it is not balanced and does not pretend to be.

There is also a la carte service, where some felt needs may be met, if happily the customer knows what elements of a proper diet he needs. In literature, this is also an emergency step, sometimes called "filling the gaps." It represents a great advance over the first method, but it is still a matter of trying to catch up and patch up.

Ideally a table d'hote meal is planned in advance, just as a careful housewife prepares the day's diet with regard for the various types of foods required for health. In Christian literature this is largely an ideal toward which we should work.

Research and study of Christian literature efforts are needed to help committees move toward the balanced program with the resources at hand. It must be done not merely through questionnaires and statistics (though they may have their place) but through practical consultation and the sharing of experience of those who understand the field conditions under which literature must be produced.

1957 will mark the launching of a long-range study and action program for Christian literature around the world. Lit-Lit and the Committee on Christian Literature for Women and Children in Mission Fields, Inc. are joining in this project which has a four-fold purpose. First, what Christian literature is being produced in the areas where we work? Second, how effective is existing literature? This calls for study of methods and standards of evaluation, a most difficult and important task with great implications for all literature groups. Third, what would be a balanced program of Christian literature, in a given field? Since new reading habits in many countries show a preference for magazines and for pictures, how can these tastes be used to promote Christian literature? Fourth, what are the next steps toward a program of more effective Christian literature? What is the core of the problem? What are the priorities? All of this survey study is to be a cooperative effort with committees and groups on the field, with them rather than for them, to find ways that they may wish assistance, and means appropriate for the years ahead of us.

This ambitious project, made financially possible by the Committee on Christian Literature for Women and Children in Mission Fields, begins a two-year phase which we expect will lead us into continuing and increasing service. Miss Marion Van Horne, as our new Lit-Lit Associate Secretary for Literature, will give full time

to this study. Miss Van Horne comes to us from a significant service with the Reformed Church of America.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Considerably enlarged funds will be needed if the mission boards are to exploit the opportunities before them. In some areas, governments are taking over mission schools. Medical work may pass to public support. As these traditional forms of Christian service are reduced, the boards can find in literacy and Christian literature an effective method of evangelization and of Christian nurture.

PERSONNEL

The greatest need is trained personnel. We urge the boards to consider more carefully than in the past, the sending of well qualified missionaries for literacy and literature work. Just as skills are required for medical and educational missions, so they are needed in this field. The results will largely be commensurate with the investment in personnel. Training courses, in this country and abroad, are one of the Committee's urgent needs.

However, foreign missionary personnel will not be enough. Even a perfect book for Africa, if it be granted that missionaries could write it and Lit-Lit were to publish it in New York or London would not do. Not until the writing of the book becomes a training experience for an African writer, and not until we help the National write his own book, can we promote indigenous literature for the Younger Church. Scholarships to this country, or to other countries, will be needed increasingly in the coming years. Writers' institutes and workshops are urgently needed.

The cooperative literacy and literature work abroad should be strengthened in three ways: through adequate support of full time personnel, through professional or technical training of workers, and through study visits and the exchange of experience across national and language boundaries.

The future support of this work must ultimately rest on the conviction that here is an aid which mission boards cannot neglect without weakening the foundations of Christian work,

Today literature is indispensable to the effective achievement of the programs of agricultural missions, of medical and health education, of the development of the Christian community and its economic welfare; and especially for the training of church workers

and the ministry. To this is added the contribution which literature makes to the upbuilding of the life of the individual member of the church, as well as the impact of the church upon the non-Christian community.

The Christian faith has been transmitted over the centuries with the inspiration of a collection of sixty-six books. We simply cannot think of church life and personal devotions without an open Bible. If we need study guides and devotional aids, how much more are they necessary for a new church in a hostile culture! The Christian missionary enterprise can only be fully effective when it makes maximum use of the printed word, which has been indispensable in history, and is equally important in our own experience.

Published in 1957 for the
Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature
of the Division of Foreign Missions, NCCC
156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.